

BLUM

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Hadi Falapishi
Edge of the World

BLUM Los Angeles
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January 9, 2025, Los Angeles, CA—BLUM is pleased to present New York-based artist Hadi Falapishi's first solo exhibition with the gallery, *Edge of the World*.

Exhibiting Falapishi's new body of shrewdly deskilled panels alongside photorealistic paintings and bold ceramic sculptures, *Edge of the World* demonstrates the remarkable range inherent to the artist's practice as he examines the widely varying possibilities for visual representation. Falapishi's works cannibalize a vast quantity of reference material—from the Surrealists to Spaghetti Western films—to create a carefully selected composite of signs and signifiers. Deconstructing the vulnerabilities within both the act of viewing and of being viewed, *Edge of the World* is insightfully humorous, art historically allusive, and stylistically multifaceted.

Growing up in Tehran as the son of two photographers and later studying photography at Bard College, Falapishi's now interdisciplinary practice has a unique and expansive approach to the mechanism as medium. For Falapishi, the mechanism that he now activates to make work is the art and cultural historical canon. Deploying imagery from this pool of reference material, the artist situates his and other bodies therein. In his photorealistic paintings in *Edge of the World*, such as *Professional Painter in a Tree on the Sixteenth of September* (2024) or *Professional Painter in a False Mirror* (2024), for instance, Falapishi inserts his likeness into famous compositions by René Magritte while facetiously giving himself the title of "Professional Painter" as both a rebuke and an assessment of the painting style.

Stemming from the photorealistic paintings, Falapishi's ceramic sculptures and panels with cardboard allow the artist to playfully explore the psychological state that drives his practice. Rendered in a loose style—with flat colors, crude shapes, and blocky horizon lines—these works borrow from the ethos of the CoBrA art movement in their hue and sentiments prioritizing spontaneity and experimentation. Simultaneously, in a gesture reminiscent of Mike Kelley, Falapishi grants new intellectual and emotional depth to that which might otherwise appear childlike, embedding art historical references in his faux-naïf scenes for those that know to look. *Still Life with Cat and Mouse* (2024), for example, adds a cartoonish cat and mouse to a still life with a bottle that clearly alludes to the oeuvre of Giorgio Morandi.

Falapishi leverages the humor that is intrinsic to an unlikely pairing to great effect. Transposing his face onto the bosom of a Roman statue in *Professional Painter in a Roman Statue* (2024) or inserting a lamppost referencing artists' artist Martin Kippenberger into a work with simple depth and imprecise lines, Falapishi asserts a truth that has echoed through time with other great storytellers such as William Faulkner. Complex thoughts on the grand nature of existence can sometimes come from the most uncomplicated or unexpected places.

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Hadi Falapishi (b. 1987, Tehran, Iran) lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. His work has been the subject of numerous solo exhibitions, including *SEARCHERS in Three Acts*, ART&NEWPORT, Newport, RI; *Almost There*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY (2023); *As Free As Birds*, Goldsmiths Centre for Contemporary Art, London, UK (2022); *Young and Clueless*, The Power Station, Dallas, TX (2022); and *In Practice: Total Disbelief*, SculptureCenter, New York, NY (2020), among others. His work is found in public collections such as the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY.

About BLUM

BLUM represents more than sixty artists and estates from seventeen countries worldwide, nurturing a diverse roster of artists at all stages of their practices with a range of global perspectives. Originally opened as Blum & Poe in Santa Monica in 1994, the gallery has been a pioneer in its early commitment to Los Angeles as an international arts capital.

The gallery has been acclaimed for its groundbreaking work in championing international artists of postwar and contemporary movements, such as CoBrA, Dansaekhwa, Mono-ha, and Superflat, and for organizing museum-caliber solo presentations and historical survey exhibitions across its spaces in Los Angeles, Tokyo, and New York. Often partnering with celebrated curators and scholars such as Cecilia Alemani, Alison M. Gingeras, Sofia Gotti, Joan Kee, and Mika Yoshitake, the gallery has produced large-scale exhibitions focusing on the Japanese Mono-ha school (2012); the Korean Dansaekhwa monochrome painters (2014); the European postwar movement CoBrA (2015); Japanese art of the 1980s and 1990s (2019); a rereading of Brazilian Modernism (2019); a revisionist take on the 1959 MoMA exhibition, *New Images of Man* (2020); and a survey of portraiture through a democratic and humanist lens (2023); among others.

BLUM's wide-reaching program includes exhibitions, lectures, performance series, screenings, video series, and an annual art book fair at its base in Los Angeles. BLUM Books, the gallery's publishing division, democratically circulates its program through original scholarship and accessible media ranging from academic monographs, audio series, magazines, to artists' books.

Across the three global locations, BLUM prioritizes environmental and community stewardship in all operations. In 2015, it was certified as an Arts:Earth Partnership (AEP) green art gallery in Los Angeles and consequently became one of the first green certified galleries in the United States. The gallery is also a member of the Gallery Climate Coalition, which works to facilitate a more sustainable commercial art world and reduce the industry's collective carbon footprint. BLUM is committed to fostering inclusive and equitable communities both in its physical and online spaces and believes that everybody should have equal access to creating and engaging with contemporary art.

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